

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BOGOTA 03581 170401Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----043300 170404Z /62

O 170247Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 7509
INFO AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY CARACAS IMMEDIATE
USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L BOGOTA 3581

EXDIS

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, PEPR, PORC, CS, CO, VE
SUBJ: PANAMA TREATIES

FOR THE ACTING SECRETARY FROM THE AMBASSADOR

1. REGRET THAT I COULD NOT TALK TO PRESIDENT LOPEZ BEFORE THIS EVENING BECAUSE HE WAS OUT OF TOWN FOR MOST OF THE DAY AND SUBSEQUENTLY WAS INAUGURATING A NEW GAITAN MUSEUM IN BOGOTA.

2. LOPEZ UNDERSTOOD OUR PITCH IMMEDIATELY AND SAID HE WOULD BE HAPPY TO HELP. HIS PRINCIPAL CONCERN WAS THAT HE HAD JUST COME FROM MAKING A SPEECH AT THE MUSEUM IN WHICH HE HAD COME OUT STRONGLY AGAINST UNILATERAL INTERVENTION IN PANAMA IN VERY POPULIST TERMS. HE WAS APOLOGETIC AND EMBARRASSED, SAYING THAT HE WOULD NOT HAVE GIVEN THE SPEECH IF WE HAD MANAGED TO TALK BEFORE THE EVENT. I COUNTERED WITH THE FACT THAT EVEN IF HE HAD BEEN DEMAGOGIC, THE LEADERSHIP RESERVATION WAS A STRONG AFFIRMATION OF THE PRINCIPLE OF NON-INTERVENTION SO THAT THE TWO WERE NOT NECESSARILY INCOMPATIBLE.

3. LOPEZ SAID HE DID NOT WISH TO TELEPHONE TORRIJOS SINCE HE
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WAS MOST DIFFICULT TO LOCATE AND EVEN MORE DIFFICULT TO TALK TO IN THIS MANNER. HE PROPOSES TO SEND TO PANAMA HIS AMBASSADOR-AT-LARGE AND TROUBLESHOOTER CARLOS PEREZ NOSOGARAY WHO HAS A CLOSE PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH BOTH TORRIJOS AND PRESIDENT CARLOS ANDREW PEREZ OF VENEZUELA. AMBASSADOR PEREZ NOSOGARAY WILL ARRIVE IN TOCUMEN VIA BRANIFF TOMORROW MORNING AT 11:30 A.M. AND WILL PROCEED DIRECTLY TO SEE TORRIJOS.

4. WHAT PRESIDENT LOPEZ PROPOSES TO HAVE AMBASSADOR PEREZ NOSOGARAY TELL TORRIJOS IS THAT HE SHOULD ACCEPT THE LEADERSHIP RESERVATION AS IT NOW STANDS. PARTICULARLY, HE SHOULD DO ABSOLUTELY NOTHING WHICH COULD AFFECT THE TUESDAY VOTE. AFTER THE VOTE ON THE TREATY, LOPEZ PROPOSES THAT THE AMENDMENT BE SUBMITTED IN CONSULTATION TO THE OAS TO DETERMINE WHETHER IT IS IN ACCORD WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF THE OAS. HE WILL PROMISE TORRIJOS FULL COLOMBIAN BACKING FOR OAS APPROVAL. LOPEZ TOLD HE THAT THIS WAS THE ONLY REASONABLE WAY HE COULD THINK OF TO PULL THIS ONE OUT OF THE FIRE. HE BELIEVED THAT TORRIJOS WOULD NEED SUCH A MOVE TO EXPLAIN THE SITUATION TO HIS OWN PEOPLE AND TO AVOID A PLEBISCITE. WHEN I LEFT PRESIDENT LOPEZ AND AMBASSADOR PEREZ NOSOGARAY THEY WERE ATTEMPTING TO REACH PRESIDENT CARLOS ANDRES PEREZ IN VENEZUELA IN ORDER TO COORDINATE POSITIONS WITH HIM SO THAT AMBASSADOR PEREZ MIGHT APPROACH TORRIJOS WITH THE MANDATE OF BOTH PRESIDENTS.

5. AMBASSADOR PEREZ SAID HE WOULD BE HAPPY TO GIVE AMBASSADOR JORDEN A RUNDOWN ON HIS CONVERATION WITH TORRIJOS AND GAVE ME THE FOLLOWING NUMBERS WHERE HE MAY BE REACHED IN PANAMA:

A. FARALLON 69-1840, 69-1214; PANAMA 64-3161; 64-3081; B.

EITHER THE HOTEL PANAMA OR THE OFFICE OF DR. EDUARDO MORGAN. THE DEPARTMENT MAY WISH TO PASS THIS INFORMATION TO EMBASSY PANAMA.

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